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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the question of whether the construct of professionalization is a helpful instrument to assist teachers in achieving an acknowledged place and status in German society. The concept of professionalization as it is used in an everyday pedagogical context and in the context of various academic disciplines is analyzed, and the application of these concepts to initial teacher preparation in Germany and other countries is examined. A brief outline is given of the historical debate over the professional standing of teachers in Germany. Three theoretical positions found in the literature which reflect this debate are identified: (1) a deductive abstract position which attempts to deduce pedagogic professionality from a reflection on the principles of educational essence; (2) an inductive-additive position characterized by the attempts to determine educational professionalism by discussing the structure of the educational tasks, based on empirical studies; and (3) a hermeneutic-reconstructive position characterized by attempts to explore the structure of pedagogical tasks in order to develop a content-oriented definition of pedagogical professionalism. Two additional theoretical approaches to professionalization and professionalism are discussed. The first of these is related to the vocational sociology approaches and is popular with practicing teachers; the second, a newer approach, concentrates on professionalization features which are claimed to be more adequate to educative functions. (IAH)

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The Professionalization of Teachers
- The State of the Theoretical Art in Germany -

by Karlheinz Rebel

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Introduction

Many people from various occupations in Germany: theorists and practitioners,talk of professionalization and of professionals - why should not half the million German teachers join in? The longing for professionalism, anyhow, seems to express a certain mood among them. Of course, the problem of professionalization cannot be solved by referring to certain moods, even if we have to admit that mood and fashion combined may exert a powerful influence on our everyday action leading cognitions and our attitudes, and that a terminology radiating positive connotations with regard to possible career promotion,a better teaching quality and higher ranking in the public might attract many at the expense of precise terminology and - for the practitioners - helpful because realistic concepts for the development of competence and the identification of educational functions for today's teachers in today's societies.

Behind the discussions on professionalization of teachers we can not only historically but also quite recently discover sometimes almost desperate efforts over the centuries to consolidate the teaching occupation, develop a realistic specific self role and be able to adequately describe role and status of teachers and of the educational occupations: to draw mainly from their functions and their place in society adequate implications for their pre-and inservice and at least as important find effective political and societal support. This has been and still is indeed an almost herculean task which to fulfill our teachers and their theorists are in spite of all their efforts still miles away. The decisive question is whether the construct of 'professionalization' is a helpful instrument on the long and painful odyssey of our teachers to an acknowledged place and status in our societies. Perhaps we even have to find different approaches for developing explanatory theoretical models including the terminology we are using. And it may be that these approaches and models differ considerably from the ones applied in the U.S.A.

1. Teachers and Other Academics Today: Professionals or What?

The question has to be asked why German teachers find it so difficult to develop a modern professional self-role which does justice to them and is acceptable to society. Against this aim some difficult hurdles stood and still partly stand which had/ have to be taken step by step. Still in the first half of the 19th century the indi-

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vidual (teacher associations did then not exist) elementary school teacher was more an artist in his (women teachers did not exist either) fight for survival than a trained pedagogue, whilst the grammar school teacher ("Gymnasiallehrer", in German) was thanks to his 'learnedness' on a distinctly higher occupational rank and offered a model for the other teachers up to then not so successful.

Today we may characterize the status of a German teacher the following way: He/she has had an academic initial and pedagogic training (lasting between 5 and 8 years) for teachers of all types of schools, is a well paid, permament civil servant (about 85% have the security of tenure for life), enjoys a certain degree of autonomy within the classroom (especially with regard to using methods of their own choice and even content to a certain modest degree etc.). But compared to other professions,especially the so-called 'free' ones (e.g.medical,law,architecture),teachers are still far behind,or the criteria for professionalism do not (entirely) fit into their functions.Teachers have to accept that the 'genuine' professionals with their comparable training of high intellectual standard, a high degree of professional autonomy, powerful professional associations, and decisive and distinct societal functions which are acknowledged as essential for the welfare of the individual (health, justice etc.), have found ways of academic-professional consolidation beyond any doubt in the public. Could it be that some of the problems teachers have had to face are specifically connected with their achievements mentioned above (e.g. their status as civil servants) and with their attempts to use 'professionalization' as an instrument for social advancement, strongly supported by their Teacher Associations. In trying this teachers from the Teacher Training Colleges or the special Departments for elementary and secondary I-teachers at our universities often compare themselves with the teachers at the Gymnasien (grammar schools) who have a 'full' academic career. But their 'professionalism' -if it is one -is based almost exclusively on their intensive subject field studies (at the moment on an average of 6-7 years) and little or almost nothing in education. And we are certainly entitled to ask whether a broad and solid academic knowledge base **alone** justifies the term 'professionalization'. **My opinion:** It is certainly not the main criterion for the ackowledged professions like medical doctors etc.

To further clarify this problem we have to analyse the concept of 'professionalization' as it is used in an everyday pedagogical context,delineate its use from various academic disciplines, and also look abroad,though the models used in Germany for the initial training of teachers seem to be almost incomparable to models abroad.

2. 'Professionalization' in the Eyes of Teachers and in Pedagogic Literature

To start with, let us look around in pedagogical everyday life to see where and how we meet 'professionalism','professionalization','professionals'. When these terms

are used referring to teachers or are used by them, they either mean his/ her theoretical or factual knowledge or practical experience in a specialized subject field (like mathematics etc.),especially of a teacher at a Gymnasium, or his/her pedagogical, educative qualification based on experience and theoretical knowledge in relevant fields (science of education, psychology, sociology). The latter often refers to teachers in the elementary or secondary I-schools who have to study such courses during their initial education.

Also pedagogic literature and research follow this second understanding. There is no doubt that an academic standing of teacher training implies rather lengthy study programmes in two to three subject fields (according to Länder regulations, type of school, and level of class); and it is also true for a teacher preparing his/ her lessons that without solid subject field background effective and responsible teaching is impossible: Knowledge can only be pedagogically transformed and mediated when it is not only presentend in the textbook but is above all authentically available to the teacher. Maybe that Germans overstress this aspect a little; and I personally am much in favour of it! But the aspect of academic knowledge alone does not allow us to differentiate e.g.a practice-oriented teacher from a theorist doing research, mastering the academic subject in question with its specific structure and action--leading cognitions of the researcher on a highly specialized field. Any teacher would be asked by far too much to try to live up to expectations of matching the researcher with regard to his/ her knowledge base and its permanent further advancement, not to mention the fact that this would not be his/her job. In other words: 'professionalization' has to find its roots in the synthesis of broad academic knowledge, practical educative skills, and the ability to reflect his/her doing.But from our short excursion into the German history of teacher education we can perhaps better understand why making teaching learning highly scientific ("Verwissenschaftlichung", in German) could be instrumentalized by teachers and especially their Associations to reach a better professional status, higher ranking etc., and this process is called 'professionalization'. This description of a highly complicated long lasting process is admittedly a bit shortened and simplified, but the tendency is correctly presented.

Serious pedagogic literature avoids this one-sided use of the term 'professionalization'. In that section of German pedagogic literature which principally accepts the construct for teachers as a possible criterion and realistic aim for their professional development there exists consensus that 'educative professionalism' and 'professionalization' mainly refer to education, instruction,counselling etc.,for short: to their educative context. It may be operationalized as 'situational competence', i.e.'the ability to apply broadly structured, theoretically founded and thus in a manifold way abstracted knowledge to concrete situations'(Tietgens 1988,p.37); or professional acting 'as the place where to mediate between theory and practice' (De-

we 1988,p.186);or however the formulation may be chosen. There is an intensive discussion of 'professionalism' in the field of teacher in-service, of teachers for teacher inservice, and of qualification programmes for adult educators and general educational personnel. But again we find the limitation of such measures and programmes to the educative context. The subject matter field cannot have priority in this context. 'The reflection on professionalism in teacher in-service education exclusively deals with the learning of adults and the didactics (meant in the wide German sense of didactics, including aims, content, and methods/media;Kh.R.) of continuous learning components' (Kohls 1989,p. 26). From the same author,now a little more concrete: 'To make in-service needs and -expectations (in voluntary teacher inservice) consistent with the main intentions and aims of a programme requires professional action patterns' (Kohls 1989,p.31).

So far a first exemplary, rather general orientation about the German professionalization debate in educative contexts. The few quotations come from partly highly abstract argumentation contexts, partly from rather concrete experiences in practical application situations. They have in common that the professionalization construct is considered to be a useful means to reach a better qualification for the members of the pedagogic occupations, to help to push forward the process of teacher emancipation, to reach as much autonomy as possible, and by doing all this also to further career promotion.

But all these well meant efforts and theoretical approaches by no means solve the main problems connected with the construct 'professionalization'; in some cases they may make their solution even more difficult. Whilst in the 19th and the first half of the 20th century the modest degree of professionalism (used in an unspecific sense) reached by teachers, if any at all, allowed them because of the openness of their situation and their mostly extreme low status a relatively high social mobility and emancipation which compared to their starting level could be really called an educational revolution. Today societal expectations towards teachers are rather high,sometimes even unrealistic,including their 'professionalism'. But 'professionalism' in which field? Here we find a rather vague feeling of what teachers should do or not do. Growing professionalization necessarily - as in the classical professions - leads to specialization, also among the teachers (subject teachers even in the primary schools, experts for drug or sexual problems etc.). At the same time teachers - whatever their specialization may be -are expected to act pedagogically highly competently and successfully disposing of a great problem solving potential. Because such expectations are often unrealistic and may lead to parents' and public disappointment (whatever goes wrong in our society, from Nazism to ecomic difficulties,the teachers are the Nation's scapegoats) the administrative and legal mechanisms and measures in our educational systems are increasing at the expense of the educative manoeuvering space of the teachers:in short of their professionality.The teacher's

functions - as a consequence - are more of a custodial than an educative nature.
Finally there is another complex problemfield: Up to the 60ies especially the elementary and secondary I-teacher was expected to teach **and** to educate in full accordance with society, church, state, and parents. His/her fundamental beliefs were often considered to be of greater importance than his/her knowledge base.Today vocational identity and personal integrity are much more difficult to reach by teachers. Many of them show a rather resignative and frustrated habitus, and many of them suffer considerably under the burden of their job. There is no comparable symptom to be watched among medical doctors, architects, etc. And there is almost no convincing answer to the question on which basis teachers' professionalization should be built, how their educative functions should be determined. At least not when using the classical criteria from vocational sociology.
To summarize the situation of our teachers trying to become or to be professionals and at the same time ground their professionalism on what is specific for their doing as educators the term '**ambiguity**' comes very near their real situation. At the same time more and more areas of life outside the schools and the age groups traditionally being pupils/students are included in the efforts to make learning and self-education, supported by educational institutions a permanent factor in their lives. In the course of this process the educative functions of teachers become somehow blurred; the teachers' work is on the one hand devaluated as he/she has to share his/her competence with many other 'competitors'; on the other hand his/her function as allocator of vocational and life career chances is increasing; the schools are going through a process of losing their educative identity and self role ("Entpädagogisierung" in German); at the same time a high level of professionality is demanded from the teachers, a demand which supports and puts them under pressure the same time.

3. 'Professionalization' and Some Selected Theoretical Approaches to Explain it - A General Survey

In West Germany discussion on professionalism with regard to pedagogical occupations started in the 60s whereby especially the branch of social work contributed to it considerably.The scientific disciplines contributing to one or the other aspect are sociology, psychology, science of education, theory of organization and others. American influences on the reception of this term were very strong in the first phase, especially from vocational sociology. M. Liebermann's book 'Education as a Profession',1956, and W.J. Goode's and others' works were the basis for the examination of the construct, and traces of their influence are still to be found. But there are also rather early German sources, e.g. A.Fischer's book "Erziehung als Beruf", 1921 ('Education as an Occupation'; a striking resemblance with Liebermann's book title

may be noted) develops similar ideas.

In the 60ies a general process of making education an occupation ("Verberuflichung", in German) has been starting (pushed forward by internal differentiations of existing pedagogic occupations, developing new occupations by marking certain educational areas out of the existing ones,and by taking over educative functions from lay people (Hornstein/Lüders 1989). Educational theories took these practical developments up and have since then concentrated mainly on the professional shaping of the role and self role of the 'professional' educators.

Two theoretical strands may be identified accompanying this process:

The 1st bringing the 'project' of promoting especially the elementary and secondary I teacher ("Volksschullehrer",in German) to a good end, in close connection with the new phase of the socialization process of education by the educational reform ("Vergesellschaftung",in German). The term 'profesionalization' is hereby almost entirely determined by the vocational sociology reference system (Hesse 1968; Daheim 1969), similar to American approaches, but already in this early phase stressing the specific German conditions for educational occupations (e.g.teachers as civil servants). As a consequence of these developments the pedagogic literature on 'professionalization' leaves out elements of this construct which do not fit into the teaching 'profession' (e.g.autonomy, code of ethics, self recruiting mechanisms etc.) and stresses specialized academic knowledge as main basis of the profession. In this context it is remarkable that 'professionalism' is also often discussed in close neighbourhood to processes (even within the schools for elementary school pupils) making science the domineering factor in our world ("Verwissenschaftlichung",in German).In many cases both terms are almost identical (Drerup 1987, p.179;Händle/ Nitsch 1981); 'professionalization' can seemingly be defined by scientific occupational training on a specific area. Accordingly a 'professional' is somebody who passed an examination after such a training (Dewe/Otto 1984,pp.775). It is evident that by this approach many difficult problems in connection with this construct in the intersection of science, occupational training, application of scientific knowledge, occupational behavior and ethics cannot even be seen, not speaking of being solved.

The 2nd strand of researching on and conceptualizing 'professionalization' develops in the context of teacher unemployment -a sign of crisis as a consequence of structural social changes - which in the early 80ies had taken on dramatic dimensions. It provoked a discussion on the question which implications come from this situation for teacher education: e.g. its orientation according to the pedagogic practice or polyvalent study programmes opening ways to various occupations, even at the price of 'de-professionalization'; and the adequate selection of pedagogic content (continuation of the reception of social sciences in education vs.a stronger accentuation of genuine educative elements). In the course of this debate 'professionalization' was considered rather sceptically with regard to its explanatory potemtial in educa-

tional contexts. But status considerations played again an enormous role in this debate, much more than any sociological or pedagogic aspects.

Behind this debate we can identify three possible theoretical positions:

a) A **deductive abstract position** characterized by the attempts to deduce the quality of pedagogic acting, its professionality from a reflection on the principles of educational essence and from here going on to determining the distinguishing features of the educational acting repertoire;

b) an **inductive-additive position** characterized by the attempts to determine educational professionality by discussing the structure of the educational tasks (e.g.the teacher's main task is to make learning possible; educators as professional 'midwives' etc.), based on empirical studies.

Both positions have up to now not been very successful in formulating consistent theories.

c) A **hermeneutic-reconstructive position** characterized by the attempts to explore the structure of pedagogical tasks in order to develop a content-oriented definition of pedagogical professionality. 'This would have to be done on the basis of hermeneutics of educational problems and in a situation-, field-, and institution-oriented manner'(Hornstein/Lüders 1989, p.769). This third and not yet much elaborated position could be complemented by a **historical-functional analysis** of the function of education in modern societies (Tenorth 1989, p.824).

4. A Discussion of Two Elaborated Theoretical Approaches Also Widely Accepted by Practising Teachers

In this chapter a short discussion of two theoretical approaches will be done: an older one still closely related to vocational sociology approaches, but still quite effective in terms of popularity because of its wide reception by practising teachers, and a new one concentrating on professionalization features which are more adequate to educative functions.

a) Many practising teachers adopted Klaus W. DÖRING's approach (Döring 1974 and 1980). Therefore it might be interesting for American educators to learn more about this meeting of a theoretician with practitioners on a rather complicated problem field:

Döring's starting point is the view that the science of education together with its support- and neighboring sciences (adult education, psychology, educational sociology etc.) has to be considered as **the vocational science of teachers**, that 'their vocational orientation can in the long run only be achieved by the science of education. Admittedly this depends on a fully fledged,socially acceptable concept of science to be applied to the treatment of norm- and value-problems' (Döring 1980, p.35).

In addition to his argumentation Döring uses sociological literature on problems of socialization and especially applies various lists of professional traits (however without reporting on their theoretical background).

Thus, Döring refers to W.J.Goode: Characteristic of each of the established professions,and a goal of each aspiring occupation,is according to W.J.Goode (who is quoted by Döring: Goode 1957, p.194, quoted by Döring 1980,p.35; Goode's text is available in a German edition by W.M.Spondel, in: Luckmann/Sprondel 1972, pp.157-167) the "community of profession". It may be called a community by virtue of the following characteristics:

'(1) Its members are bound by a sense of identity.
(2) Once in it, few leave, so that it is a terminal or continuing status for the most part.
(3) Its members share values in common.
(4) Its role definitions vis-à-vis both members and non-members are agreed upon and are the same for all members.
(5) Within the areas of communual action there is a common language, which is understood only partially by outsiders.
(6) The Community has power over its members.
(7) Its limits are reasonably clear, though they are not physical and geographical, but social.
(8) Though it does not produce the next generation biologically,it does so socially through its control over the selection of professional trainees, and through its training processes it sends these recruits through an adult socialization process.'

Directly following Goode's criteria Döring then quotes a different set of criteria taken from René König (König 1962, quot.by Döring 1980, p.35):

'-The specific, functionally adequate training;
-the system of admission to institutions of higher learning;
-the institution of educational induction ("Referendariat", in German);
-the possibility of making a career following specific regulations;
-the social image of a profession and of its chances.'

Finally Döring summarizes various vocational-sociological concepts in form of main categories hereby following G. Zielke (Zielke 1979, quot.by Döring 1980, p.35):

'-Specialized knowledge understood as 'specialization' and 'scientific orientation'of the training programmes;
-collectivity-orientation understood as ideal of service-rendering to the clientele and the society (based on norm-orientation);
-vocational/ professional organization understood as unification of all those practising a specific profession in professional associations;
-autonomy in professional practising understood as autonomy of the members of

the respective profession as a whole (group attribute) and the authority of its individual member in his/her professional practising (role attribute).'

Döring has to admit that seen from a vocational-sociological view a consistent use of "professionalism" does not exist (Döring 1980,p.34), but even so he argues that 'the teaching profession has gone through and finalized the process of professionalization: From an occupation as a sideline it has developed a full-time, independent occupation for a living which enjoys high esteem. Its scientific orientation, the standardized admittance procedures (examinations) and remuneration regulations, the - at least virtually -existing professional ethical codes, the organisation in teacher associations, the independent and self-responsible pursuit of professional activities allow no doubt that the teaching profession as defined in vocational sociology is a full, adequate profession, that its professionalization process has come to an end.'(Döring 1980, p.35).

But exactly this estimation of the professionalization process is in many points highly controversial, not to mention the fact that Döring does not really examine professional-sociological positions and their theoretical differences. Therefore we agree with the massive criticism from H. Drerup: 'If by the thesis of teacher professionalization is meant more than the coming of age of the teaching occupation, we raise objections against all traits Döring names with regard to the teaching occupation (knowledge base, autonomy, professional organization, collectivity orientation) which at least should have cast doubt on his estimation of the teaching occupation as a profession.'(Drerup 1987, p.183).

b) Contrary to Döring's approach a most thorough and comprising work on professionalization of the teaching occupations was published in 1988 by U. Schwänke (Schwänke 1988). It approaches the problem by avoiding the wide, unspecific concept of professionalization as Döring does who limits himself to one main criterium of 'occupation as a vocation for life'. Schwänke bases his analysis on a considerably narrower understanding of this concept.From a great bulk of literature dealing with the problem of professionalization (e.g.from G.Millerson 1964: Here we find 23 criteria in the context of this construct) he summarizes the most important criteria:

'-The practice of a profession is based on a long lasting scientific special training; the activities demanded are predominantly non-manual.

-The practice of a profession requires the application of generic-abstract knowledge on concrete cases; therefore it cannot be standardized.

-There exist codified behavior rules for the practice of a profession; the observance of professional-ethical rules is controlled by colleagues or professional organizations.

-The members of a profession form a professional organization which exerts disciplinary power and controls admission to the profession.

-The professional activity consists of an important service for the individual and the society; it serves the public well-being.
-Its practice is not motivated by egotistic but by altruistic motives.
-The members of a profession are acknowledged as experts and enjoy a far-reaching autonomy which is only limited by their own sense of responsibility and the colleagues' control.
-They enjoy a high societal esteem.
-The payment for the services rendered by them predominantly exists of a fixed honorarium or fixed fees according to fixed rates.
-Frequently the members of a profession are registered or licensed by state authorities.'(Schwänke 1980,p.15).

These criteria were developed for the so called free professions. To apply them to the teaching occupation Schwänke aggregates them to a few central and for a professional group specific main criteria. According to him pedagogic professionals are characterized by:

'1.professional practice on a scientific basis,
2.a long lasting professional training,
3.altruistically motivated, clientele-oriented professional practice,
4.a thorough control of the professional training and practising,
5.effectively organized professional associations which control the adherence of their members to an ethic code of conduct,
6.autonomy of professional practice' (Schwänke 1980,p.28).

Then on the basis of these six criteria he analyses how far the teachers have proceeded on their way to full professionalization. E.g. whether their practising can be called theory-oriented;to which extent the scientific foundations for their practising can be laid during their training, and especially how they try to solve the theory-practice problem. His results can be summarized the following way (Schwänke 1980, p.224):

The teaching occupation has experienced in the 19th and 20th century an unparalleled advancement from a low esteemed by-job to a main occupation with an academic background. By this development the rather great differences between the grammar school (Gymnasiallehrer) and elementary and main school teachers (Grund-und Hauptschullehrer) were partly ironed out.But their training,occupational practice and social status are still not assimilated. Attempts in West Germany to introduce a school system structured in levels have up to now failed.For the teachers this means that the differences among them will go on in the near future, and the professionalization process has not yet come to an end, even if there have been adaptation trends towards other professions. One of the most serious obstacles against a full adaptation is the lack of autonomy compared to the medical etc.profession. And also the missing of a binding professional code of ethics formulated and controlled by the teacher asso-

ciations. And we should not fail to see certain tendencies towards a deprofessionalization also of the teaching occupation.

Scientific orientation,specialized knowledge and the role and status of experts play a decisive role in all profesionalization debates. Especially professional-sociological positions stick to the postulate of abstract knowledge as basis of professional practice. 'According to the understanding of professions as mediators between science and society, scientific progress and societal practice professional activities are interpreted (following the model of 'technological rationality') as instrumental problem-solving, grounded on the application of scientific theory and technique'; and this formulated as a kind of formula or credo: 'The application of pure or fundamental science leads to applied science; applied science produces diagnostic and problem-solving techniques, and these are used to result in services rendered.'(Drerup 1987, pp.194-195).

Refering to social and educational scientific knowledge, this type of knowledge is expected to produce enlightening effects grounded on its higher degree of rationality compared to everyday knowledge. The salvation is brought to an unscientific world by the professionals: these are the social science missionaries to the indigenes who have not yet sociology at hand (Beck/Bonss 1984, pp.383). But the fundamental question is whether this difference in rationality still exists in modern societies: perhaps the indigenes are already at least latently proselytized to sociology. Sociology disappears within the action-context,it becomes commonplace and trivial.The addressees of scientific knowledge are no longer passive objects, but potential subjects knowing how to handle scientific interpretation offers.In this radical process we can not only see the necessity of a new ethics for research,but also the questioning of the role of professionals.They seem to have lost their status as owners of specialized,arcane knowledge which had established their complete or relative autonomy. In short: The whole concept of professionalism is questioned by these developments. We should also abstain from equating academic status of the ever increasing numbers of academicians with professionalism.The larger the number of graduates become the stronger the processes of deprofessionalization are. It may be compared to inflation in economy. In addition we can watch deep going social antinomies like professionalism versus democratic participation, a deepening gap between experts and laymen, a growing alienation from scientific know-it all, on areas where lay people have to act whether science disposes of problem-solving knowledge or not.

Limited space forbids to report a very wide and crucial debate in Europe in this context. Let me therefore finish by drawing the readers' attention to the teaching people again: They are again exactly at the intersection of these processes: They would not easy their tasks by sticking to a concept like 'professionalism' which for more and more experts and lay people becomes more and more doubtful. Perhaps we find

a different term at least which allows us to go the necessary steps without the heavy weights of a long and often fruitless debate.

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